THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

SEPTEMBER, 1849.

Original Papers.

EMIGRATION FROM THE RAGGED SCHOOLS:

LORD ASHLEY'S MOTION.

We believe that neither the Ragged School teachers nor their scholars, are much in the habit of attending to the debates in the House of Commons, although the former class are greater benefactors to their country than many of those who engage in the warfare of party politics. The result, however, of Lord Ashley's Motion in the House of Commons, on the 25th of July last, was viewed by them with no common interest.

The teacher, surrounded by his class of ragged youths, whose interests he felt in a measure as bound up with his own, looked forward to the success of the effort, as the only way by which they could be provided with the means of earning their living by honest labour. The poor youths themselves were no less interested in the fate of the Motion. In one school, about sixteen lads had laboured hard for the last seven or eight months, that by good conduct and improvement they might qualify themselves for the expected boon. Never did culprit at the bar look with greater anxiety for the decision of a jury, than did some of these youths for the judgment of the Government respecting the Emigration Grant. On the favourable issue of this, all their hopes were centred. It seemed the only pathway through which they could pass from a vagrant life to one of honest industry. Their past experience had proved this. Many wearisome days had they spent, wandering the streets of London in search of employment. On many occasions had they—

> "Begg'd a brother of the earth
> To give them *leave* to toil,"

But as often had their "poor petitions" been "spurned," because their necessities were so extreme—their clothes so few—their rags so many.

Had some of these deserving lads, on the evening in question, been allowed to tell their own tale in the House of Commons, of their fruitless efforts, their patient endurance, and their anxiety to do well, they would have shown themselves entitled to greater sympathy than the world is inclined to believe.

Early on the following morning, numbers hastened to the coffee-shops, and eagerly searched the newspapers, to see whether their noble benefactor and representative had been successful. Others ran to their school-fellows, inquiring whether they had obtained any intelligence. One poor lad, on discovering the result, exclaimed, "Our hopes are all up now; Lord Ashley has lost his Motion!" The sad account was speedily communicated from one to another. Their hopes were crushed, by the closing up of what seemed to them the only avenue to respectability and usefulness. Similar feelings were entertained by many of their teachers and friends, who had also encouraged a faint hope, that at least some assistance might be rendered by Her Majesty's Government, for the promotion of a scheme fraught with so many important and beneficial results.

We are fully aware of the various objections that have been urged against the proposition, during the debate in the House of Commons, and by the public press. But very few of these objections are substantiated by facts, and in many cases they are raised upon premises which are altogether groundless. It is not our present intention to enter into the details of the argument, as it might prove of little practical benefit; but there is one point to which we must briefly refer, as an act of justice to the objects of our sympathy and care.

We refer to an impression which prevails in many quarters, that the children of the Ragged Schools are composed chiefly, if not entirely, of the criminal class. This was evidently the impression on the mind of Sir George Grey, when, in reply to Lord Ashley, he said, "No doubt very great advantage might be derived by the removal of that very large class of which his noble friend spoke; but then it should be observed, that they were the criminal, and not the merely poor children whose cause he was advocating." Now, we believe, that whatever instances Lord Ashley might adduce to prove a certain position, it was far from his intention to show that it was merely for a class of thieves and criminals that he sought the benefit of emigration. Of the 150 children who have already emigrated, very few of them were of the criminal class, although, in several instances, when at the depôt at Deptford, prior to embarkation, they were branded with the epithet of "London thieves." Many of them had, in the midst of great privation, maintained as strict integrity as those by whom they were so unjustly charged.

It is true that many of the Ragged School children have been con-

victed of theft, and, no doubt, others have stolen who were never detected; but if our own experience is worth anything, it goes to prove that a very large majority of these children are as innocent of such charges, as those attending the National or British Schools. We consider the Ragged School system to be a *preventative* more than a reformatory one, although, in the latter case, it has also proved its efficiency. Our object is, to *anticipate* the work of the jailer, and by a wholesome course of moral and religious training, so prevent its necessity—to teach these children that "honesty is the best policy," and that labour is more profitable than idleness and theft—to convince them of this before they become tainted by crime, and then supply them with the prospects of labour by emigration to the colonies. We point to the enormous number of juvenile criminals as a proof of the necessity of prevention, as shown by the dangers of the malady, and the difficulty of effecting a cure. We refer to those who have repeatedly been made the subjects of prison discipline, and eventually of transportation; and we maintain that, by early training, the school would have prevented the necessity of the prison, and at a tenth part of the expense; and instead of the youth being the sullen convict in chains, he might have been the happy emigrant in freedom. Through the agency of Ragged Schools, very many have already been *saved* from such a fate, and it would only have been receiving from Government a portion of the money, which would have otherwise been spent for their imprisonment and transportation, if assistance had been rendered in transmitting them to Australia.

A similar impression to that already mentioned is evinced by the writer of an article which appeared in the *Times* of the 26th July. When referring to the claims of the country population, he says, "Why is an industrious village lad to be denied, and a reformed pickpocket accepted? . . . Why tell the country boy, that his only chance of getting his passage paid to the colonies is to run up to town, do a little pilfering, get familiar with the jail, go now and then to the Ragged School, just as it suits him, and after a very mixed career, get sent out to the colonies?"

It was no small difficulty, a few years since, to convince the public of the necessity of adhering to the term "Ragged." Some kind spirits thought it was cruel to degrade the children by such an epithet. These benevolent people are now satisfied on this point, and the children have not been injured. But we know of no surer way of degrading them, than by identifying the term "Ragged," which is merely expressive of extreme poverty and neglect, with those of "criminals" and "pickpockets." Because some of these children have been convicted of theft, it does not surely follow, that they are all thieves. But from the above quotation, "a little pilfering," and "an acquaintance with the jail," would seem to

be necessary qualifications for admission into a Ragged School, and by *a mere nominal attendance* there, secure a free passage to the colonies. Had the writer of that statement *read* Lord Ashley's speech attentively, he would have seen, that every boy had to attend regularly for six months in a Ragged School, four months an Industrial Class, and become acquainted with the elements of a religious and secular education; and that the lad who "goes now and then to a Ragged School, just as it suits him," would never become eligible for emigration at all. The object is to send them out with *good characters*, after a sufficient term of probation and training, and not to place them on a footing with convicts, with the brand of infamy still upon them. Were this not the case, the "country lad" would better secure his purpose by committing a criminal act, instead of "a little pilfering," get comfortably lodged in the prison of Parkhurst or Pentonville, where he would be supplied with better food and lodging than ever he had before, and secure his passage to the colonies, without passing through the trying ordeal of the Ragged Scholar, who has often to go to school with an empty stomach, and make his bed at night under an archway.

We earnestly hope that the public may not be misled by such statements as those to which we have referred. To show how different are the conclusions of those who have properly investigated the subject, we subjoin the following article, which appeared in one of the daily papers, on the 24th of July:—

"There are few who will not have in remembrance the remarkable and interesting statement which was made last session by Lord Ashley, on the subject of our Ragged Schools. So deeply did it impress the Government, that within a fortnight Earl Grey consented to an arrangement, whereby 150 children were taken from those schools as Emigrants to New South Wales, partly at the cost of the Colonial Land Fund, administered by the Emigration Commissioners in Park Street, and partly at the charge of the Government at home. Under this arrangement 150 children were sent to Moreton Bay, Port Phillip, and Port Adelaide. They were selected from amongst 6,000 children, at 30 different London Schools. Every security was obtained as regarded their competency and fitness. They underwent no less than *five* scrutinising examinations. They were first examined by a local committee, which passed them, with its recommendation, to the Ragged School Union. They underwent a second examination by the committee of that central board. They were then examined a third time by one of her Majesty's School Inspectors; and having passed his ordeal, they were examined by the Emigration Agent, who rejected nearly a third of them, on the ground that they were not qualified for the shearing of colonial sheep. Those, however, who were fortunate enough to escape the awful judgment of this gentleman with the shears, were passed for a final examination by a medical officer, competent to decide whether a ragged urchin's rash was a rash or something else, and if not found to be "something else," the child was sent on board.

"The scrutiny and sifting which the candidates underwent resulted in the selection of as fine a body of lads as ever were sent to a British colony. The result of the plan, tried even upon this very limited scale, has been,

as regards the Ragged Schools, peculiarly beneficial. To be selected as an emigrant has been to the Ragged School urchin the senior wranglership of his humble university. The prize was awarded on considerations—first, of length of time in the school and good character during that interval; second, of proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, without a suitable knowledge of which rudiments no Ragged School boy has been sent to any of the colonies. Can the Emigration Commissioners give half so good an account of their Dorsetshire and Devonshire plough-followers?

"We have said that the prizes had an excellent effect upon the school. What effect do you suppose them to have had upon society? Here are the cases of two children sent out as emigrants:—

"1st. J. P., aged fourteen years.—Father dead; has a step-father, who, shortly after marrying his mother, turned him into the street. There he managed as he could, sleeping on stairs and doorsteps for above three months, during which time he never had his clothes off. He was employed during the day by the coiners of Duck Lane, in passing base coin, at which he was very expert—so much so, that they on several occasions endeavoured to entice him away from the Ragged School. This lad having, by good conduct for a considerable time, secured a free passage from the Government Commissioners as an emigrant, is now on his way to Australia, full of joy and gratitude and good resolutions.

"2nd. W. L., aged eighteen years.—Had not slept on a bed for upwards of three years, neither had his clothes off during that time—except when he got wet, and then he lay naked, in a hole under the stairs of an empty house in St. Herman's Hill. He had no recollection of ever seeing his parents, he being left at the door of Westminster workhouse when he was two years old. Was an inmate of the workhouse twelve years. He was sent from there on board a fishing smack; but, through the ill usage of the captain (as he said) he ran away, and came again to Westminster. There he lived by carrying for the costermongers in the Broadway, holding horses, etc. Was once in prison (Tothill Fields) for taking part in the Chartist riots: this, he said, was the happiest time of his life. This poor lad was the most miserable object the teacher ever saw. Divested of his rags, he seemed one mass of filth and vermin, which could not be fairly got rid of for a considerable time. He also became an emigrant to Australia."

"What would these children have been at home? Pests to society, idle and profligate, criminals in our gaols, or paupers in our workhouses—in either case at a heavy cost to the state and to the industrious population of the country. What are they in Australia? Industrious, well-paid, useful labourers. *Every child that has been sent out got employment* within three days after landing, and at a rate of wages averaging somewhat more than £14 a year, besides keep.

"But we will afford the reader an opportunity of judging for himself of the capacities of the children sent out, and of the demand for their services in the colonies. Here is a letter, highly creditable in composition, from a boy of fifteen, who was selected from the Broadwall, Blackfriars School, as one of the emigrants in the first vessel. He writes thus to his schoolmaster:—

"Ipswich, Moreton Bay, Dec. 26, 1848.

"SIR,—I send these few lines to you, hoping to find you in good health, as it leaves me at present. We have arrived in safety, and thank God for it. We had a bad passage from Plymouth to the line. When we were within eight days' sailing of the Cape of Good Hope, they found we were short of provisions; but we still kept on, for a heavy gale of wind set in about the middle watch, which nearly carried our foremast away, but, thank God, it did pass away without doing harm. Three days after we left the Straits we came in sight of Sidney Head, and the fourth day, at six o'clock, we hoisted the Union Jack up to the foremast for a pilot; he came on board, and stopped for two or three hours, and then left us all the day. We were nearly all suffocated by the burning wind; it was just like standing before a large

furnace, it was so hot. As soon as the pilot left us a gale of wind came on all of a sudden, that we thought she had struck against a rock; she shook awfully, for the sails were out, but in less than ten minutes they were all down. The wind continued to blow all the night very hard, for we went at the rate of fourteen knots an hour. On Saturday night we left Sidney; we reached Moreton Bay on the Tuesday following. We went ashore on the 16th and 17th. On the 20th I went to Ipswich, where I have a good situation as gentleman's servant; I have twenty pounds a year, board, lodging, plenty to eat and drink. I have had a merry Christmas of it. Please to give my best respects to Mrs. Miller, Mr. Harriss, Mr. Truman, and to Mr. Martin. Give my kind love to Agnes Coleman, and tell her I wish she would come out to us, for I should have been quite happy to see her, and there is plenty of work for everybody. We were no sooner at the depôt than we were all hired. Walker has gone up the country as a shepherd, he being one hundred miles from where I am at present. Please to remember me to all the boys and girls.

"From your humble and obedient servant, J. RAVENSCROFT."

"Letters in a similar strain have been received from other boys. As far as the accounts have gone up to the present time, the whole of them are doing well; they are liked in the colony, and are contented with their position. The cost to the Government at home of sending out these children has not averaged, we believe, £5 per head, and they are disposed of for life; whilst in a prison they would have cost £10 a year, with the prospect—nay the almost certainty—of coming in again every year of their lives until otherwise disposed of.

"Such being the facts concerning this Ragged School Emigration, it may cause regret to hear that Sir George Grey has communicated to those who are responsible for putting the plan into operation, that the Treasury "are not prepared to sanction" any further expenditure on this head, and that they must rely in future upon voluntary contributions. We cannot quarrel with the principle of this refusal, though we regret its result. And yet the money was cheaply spent. The amount expended by the Home Government upon these 150 children was not, we believe, £1,000.* At Clerkenwell sessions, last year, there were 550 individuals, under seventeen years old, convicted of petty theft, at a cost to the country for prosecutions of £1,200, to say nothing of the cost attending their imprisonment before and after trial.

"Lord Ashley will bring this subject before the House of Commons to-day, and will at least call attention to the facts. Government say, "the sum required is so small, that it can be raised by voluntary contributions." But the Ragged Schools have plenty of demands for all their voluntary contributions. They have to hire, to fit up, to furnish their schools; they have to pay salaries to the teachers; to provide books, to make known their claims, and conduct their business. If the income of the Ragged Schools was doubled to-morrow, how would they apply the money? Why, looking at the necessities of the case, no doubt in multiplying the number of establishments. But by the loss of the Grant, a great stimulus to the prosperity of these schools is taken away, and this £1,000 lost, one great element of their prosperity is necessarily lost also."—*Daily News, July 24th.*

Efforts are now being made by the Committee of the Ragged School Union to raise a sum sufficient to send out at least a limited number during the present year. It is hoped that the public will show their appreciation of the scheme, by supplying the Committee with sufficient means, without interfering with the regular funds of the Union, or the prosperity and extension of the local schools.

* The whole amount was £1,500.

DUTY AND BLESSING;

BEING

NOTES OF A SERMON ON BEHALF OF RAGGED SCHOOLS,

PREACHED AT ST. MILDRED'S CHURCH,

BY THE REV. W. W. CHAMPNEYS, M.A., RECTOR OF WHITECHAPEL.

(From 1 Sam. xxx. 11—15.)

FACTS of the case stated.—Ziklag had been given to David by Achish, king of Gath. When the princes of the Philistines were jealous of David, Achish dismissed him, and so God delivered him from the entanglement into which he had brought himself. On his return to Ziklag with his 600 soldiers, he finds it smitten and burnt—a blackened, smoking ruin, instead of a happy, peaceful town, and all the inhabitants carried away by the Amalekites. They pursued the invaders. While on their way they came to a man, lying in an open field, apparently dying; his peculiar complexion and marked countenance at once tell them that he is an Egyptian. The advanced guard stops. What shall they do? Go on—march by—leave him? No; they brought him to David. What will he do? It's only an Egyptian—a poor man as his dress showed—a stranger—a dying man. What will be the use of stopping? he will soon die—he is not likely to be saved. The delay, if made, will be useless, and the time is very precious; the time wasted in delay may save their lost friends. Why then waste it? Why not pass on, and let the dying man die? wives, children, friends—all beckon them forward.. But then this is a *man*, a *brother*, a *sick* man, as his poor wasted face too plainly shows—a dying man, unless they save him from death: he is alone in the open field. It is a chance if any other pass this way, and if no other does, he *must* perish. A little help may recover him. They have seen him—their march has been led to the spot where the forlorn stranger lies—God's providence has thrown him on them. What says David? We *must* stop and help him; this is our *present and immediate duty*, and we must do it. So they raise him up, put a little bread into his mouth, and he eats it. They pour a little water into his mouth, and moisten his parched lips; "they give him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins," and when he hath eaten them, "his spirit comes again to him." It is life from the dead; he revives and sits up; David asks him, "Whence art thou?" "I am a young man of Egypt," said he, "servant to an Amalekite, and my master left me because three days agone I fell sick. We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and we burned Ziklag with fire." Ziklag! the very place—here is one of the troop that destroyed it! It flashes across David's mind that he will know the way they retreated, "Canst thou bring me down to this company?" The young man guides them to the spot. The Amalekites, like our Danes found by Alfred, are attacked, defeated, destroyed, except four hundred, and all the spoils are recovered.

Did they *then* regret their delay? did they find their time lost—their kindness thrown away? did they think that finding that poor stranger had been a thing of chance? did they see no higher hand in it than a hard, selfish master, casting away his servant because he was of no

further use to him? Did David reason so? did he not rather see an inseparable connection between *duty* and *blessing?* did he not see that the very object he was seeking seemed to be suspended upon their behaviour to that apparently dying man? did he not see how there was moral probation in that circumstance? If he, by reflection, saw the connection between *duty* and *blessing*, we, by reflection, *may* and *should* do the same.

There are those lying in our path whose state, *in themselves*, is as sad and pitiful as that of the outcast Egyptian, and whose influence on others is far worse. Was he deserted by his unnatural master—regarded only as far, and as long, as he could be useful? Was he left to perish when he became a burden, and did those who should have helped and aided him desert him in his utmost need, and leave him in the open field to die? Was he so sick that, without aid, he must have died? Was he starving? Did he want bread, and was there no one to break it to him? water to moisten his parched lips, and no one to give him any, though the well, perhaps, was near, of which he could not draw? Are there none lying, as it were, around our path—lying on the very course of our daily march—who are sick as he was, forsaken as he was, dying as he was, and lost as he would have been? Are there none whose friends have left them, parents forsaken them, mothers deserted them, and cast them into the open field of a cold, sinful world, to live if they could, or die if they might? Are there none that are sick unto death—sick of a disease that never failed to kill? Are there none whom we meet in our way, who are even worse that this—whose state is far more pitiable than the poor outcast Egyptian?

A man dying of the plague, and walking about with it, breathing it on his path, spreading it by his touch, communicating it by his clothes, carrying an atmosphere of corruption wherever he moves, dying and spreading death—such an one is worse than the Egyptian servant—and such an one is many a *ragged child!* Forsaken by those who should have been his protectors, corrupted by those who should have been his exemplar, spotted with the deep blue plague-spots of early iniquity, his lively fancy exercised only in sin, his young memory stored only with recollections of impurity—a dead carcase putrifying in the open field is nothing to the *walking* pestilence—to 30,000 such outcasts in the streets of London.

Christians, like David, are seeking first their own salvation—to recover the lost inheritance—those nearest and dearest to them are all their first care. It is no blame to David to wish to get back his lost dear ones. Grace does not outrage nature. It was the duty of the Amalekite to have helped his own sick servant. It was the duty of the parents and friends of these poor outcasts to have trained, taught, and helped them. That father who is now in a foreign land, living in sin with another woman, will have to answer at the bar of God for leaving his poor children. That *stepmother*, whose heartless conduct made the home so wretched as to drive the poor motherless child out of doors, will have to answer. Those drunken parents, who brought themselves to beggary and their children to the streets, will have to answer; they should have done their duty, and they will have to account for not doing it.

But will the Christian go on, and leave these outcasts to perish? Thrown on him as they are by God's providence, and commended to him by Christ's love—can he do so? The Ragged Schools give the answer. He cannot. He must stop. He must help to lift up those who are down—to give of his own bread—the bread of life, and the water of life, to the poor outcast. *This is his duty*, and he will do it; and 800 Ragged School teachers prove that Christians feel it to be so, each doing David's part.

But duty and blessing are united; we have seen how they were in David's case; but it is not one by itself—it is a sample, a specimen, one of a class. Duty and blessing ever go together, and it is in the way of duty that the blessing comes—"I being in the way, the Lord led me."

David's first and simple object was, to save the dying stranger's life. He thought of nothing beyond this. It never entered into his mind that *he* should reap any benefit from what he was doing. Neither, I am persuaded, has the Ragged School teacher. He has one object—by his instrumentality to save that dying soul, to raise that fallen being, to stop that plague that is destroying one and corrupting many, "to save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." This is his *one* object. And if he can see this accomplished he has his reward.

If he can once see the dead awake from their sleep and look up—if he can see the death-fixed eye lighted up with the light of life—if he can once see the closed lips opened in praise and prayer—he has his reward. But assuredly there is another blessing in store. Every focus of malaria removed from a city, is a blessing to that city. Disease, as it sweeps over like a baloon, is held, kept, and stopped by malaria, as by a grappling-iron, and instead of a *lodger* becomes a *dweller*—dwelling to destroy; a *centre* of evil influence, the removal of which is a general benefit. The foul air cannot lodge in the mews behind the mansion, without injury not only to the poor servants of the mews, but the masters in the mansion. The court and alley that leads out of the splendid street cannot be full of disease, without tainting the whole air around it. The man who neutralises the evil influence of one such circle of malaria, benefits a whole neighbourhood; and every ragged child that is humanised and christianised, is such a centre of evil removed from a community, and changed into a centre of blessing—a planet moving along with an atmosphere of health, instead of the air of death and desolation.

PAUPERISM IN ENGLAND.—By the last Report to the House of Commons, it appears that the total amount of pauperism of 1848 was 1,876,541 souls. The habitual pauperism of England thus presents an average of numbers equal to the population of London and its suburbs. The pauperism of the previous year only amounted to 1,471,133 persons. The increase is partially accounted for by the swarms of Irish that have been driven across the Channel by the destitution of the distressed districts.

EXPENSE OF PRISON DISCIPLINE.—The expense of Parkhurst Prison in 1847 was £14,349; of Pentonville, £18,307. The total expense of prosecutions, removals, and subsistence of convicts, formerly paid out of county rates, is £343,000 a year.

EXTRACTS FROM THE FOURTEENTH REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF PRISONS FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ENGLAND, 1849.

Comparative Cost of Cells and Cots.

"THE sums heretofore expended on prison buildings have, in some cases, been enormous. The cost is seldom less than £100 to £150 per prisoner, (a sum sufficient for building two or three neat cottages, each able to contain a whole family,) and in some instances it has been much more. A portion only (the newest) of the county prison at York, capable of accommodating only 160 prisoners, cost £200,000, which is more than £1,200 per prisoner, enough if it had been desired to build for each prisoner a separate mansion, with stable and coach-house!"

Juvenile Prisoners and Juvenile Scholars.

"I HAVE sometimes had to call attention to the tender ages at which children are occasionally sent to prison, ages at which, if they had been in the upper or middle classes of society, they would scarcely have left the nursery, and at which, if they had committed any offence, a few hours' separation from their companions would probably be the most severe punishment resorted to. To send a child seven or eight years old to an ordinary prison, to a fortress with grated doors and barred windows, guarded at all points, and surrounded by high walls, would seem when stated in plain terms to be an act both of folly and cruelty. And when not only the public money is wasted, and the child treated without regard to the feelings and fears of infancy, but, owing to the bad state of the prison, the little thing is placed in a position in which he is in danger of being corrupted for life, the picture in all its features becomes painful and revolting.

"Nevertheless, under present circumstances, a magistrate must often, however he may feel the evils of such a commitment, have great difficulty in determining what to do; and I am humbly of opinion, that the only effectual remedy is to have good juvenile prisons and well regulated industrial schools, (the latter to form part of our poor law establishment,) in one or other of which all children may be placed, who become either thieves or beggars."

From the Report of Prison at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

"IT is doubly painful, with reference to the demoralizing state of the prison, to think that a considerable portion of the prisoners are very young, and are therefore at an age when they can be most easily influenced for good or for evil. Last year there were more than 200 prisoners under 17 years of age. Under the circumstances which have been mentioned, it is not surprising that the number of recommitments is very great, especially among juvenile offenders.

"The following is the chaplain's evidence:—

"'I am of opinion that, under present circumstances, confinement in the borough prison of Newcastle tends to the moral injury of those who are subjected to it—in fact, that the prison acts as a nursery of crime instead of as a reformatory.

"'These observations bear specially on cases of juvenile delinquency. The number of recommittals among juvenile offenders is astoundingly frequent. About a week ago, I found on examination that eight boys then in prison, whose ages varied from ten to fourteen, had together been 104 times in the prison. One of them had been in the prison seven times before he was eleven years old.'"

Poetry.

PRISON THOUGHTS.

THE FOLLOWING VERSES WERE WRITTEN BY A PRISONER IN THE PRISON OF DURHAM:—

Cag'd in a prison cell, how sad, yet true,
Does the lone heart bring former scenes to view,
'Till the rack'd mind, with bitter frenzy driven,
Maligns the just decrees of man and Heaven.
The grated bars, and iron-studded door,
The cold bare walls, and chilly pavement floor,
The hammock, table, stool, and pious book,
The jailer's stealthy tread, and jealous look,
Force back the maddened thoughts to other days,
When joyous youth was crowned with hopeful bays;
E'er rank luxuriant folly reigned supreme,
As if this life was nothing but a dream;
Or the dire cup had seared the unblighted heart,
And caused all holy feelings to depart.
My father's home, my mother's cheerful smile,
Where sat affection free from selfish guile;
Each pleasant hour, so innocently gay,
Passed like a mellow summer's eve away.
No baneful passions fired my tranquil mind,
No wild unruly thoughts ranged unconfined;
But all was fair and gladsome as the grove,
Where warbling songsters live in artless love.
How changed my lot!—no sister, mother, sire,
Now fondly sit around the wintry fire;
No household song beguiles the lengthened night,
No homely jest creates a fond delight;
No Sabbath morning sees us now engage
In rapt attention on the holy page;
Or hears the swelling notes of praise and prayer
Borne on the breeze, and floating on the air.
Oh! could my parents' shades but bend on earth,
They'd mourn like me the morning of my birth.
Cursed be the hour when first I turned astray
From keeping sacred God's own hallowed day;
When first I learned to sip the poisoned bowl
That kills the body and corrupts the soul.
'Twas then my godly lessons, one by one,
Fled from my giddy heart till all were gone,
And left behind a waste and dreary wild,
A conscience hardened, and a soul defiled.
Oh! when I think on what I've been, and see
My present state, and think what I may be,
Despair and horror burns and boils within,
For years of folly and continued sin,
Until my brain seems bursting with the dread
Of Heaven's just judgments falling on my head.
Almighty Father! God of life and death!
Give, oh! give me a true and living faith;
Bestow thy quickening Spirit, and impart
Thy saving grace to tranquillize my heart,
That I may better live for time to come,
And rear my spirit for thy heavenly home.

Editor's Portfolio.

CRIME AND GENIUS.

Some two years and eight months back, says the *Dundee Warder*, a youth, then entered upon his thirteenth year, was placed at the bar of the Justiciary Court at Perth, accused of stealing, or being in company with others who stole some loaves of bread from a cart on the Perth Road, Dundee. Though young in years, he was, in legal phraseology, old in crime. "Previous conviction" formed the concluding words of the libel on which he was charged, and the new conviction obtained sealed his fate, almost for time and eternity. At thirteen years of age, for stealing a loaf of bread—such is the merciful state of our criminal law—this child received sentence of seven years' transportation! and no doubt would have been sent to associate for the most eventful period of human existence with the polluted and abandoned, had something like a providential occurrence not taken place. It so happened, that after coming back to the prison, waiting to be shipped off to a foreign land, he was attacked with a disease in the elbow joint. Whether his journey to a penal settlement was prevented by this cause, we are not prepared to say; but certain it is, from the day he returned from the Justiciary Court at Perth, he has had to inhabit one of the cells in the criminal jail of Dundee. On visiting his lonely apartment the other day, we found him seated on a small chest, busily employed in mending the binding of books belonging to the library—an occupation, we were given to understand, in which he takes great delight. Around him lay on the floor of his cell several works on mathematics and astronomy, while the walls were covered with a number of maps of various countries in the world. If there was any lack of provision for the belly, there was no want of food for the mind. After some interesting conversation with the youth, in order to test his powers, the indefatigable teacher in the prison, Mr. Lindsay, who accompanied us, requested him to take up the slate, and determine the position of the moon on a given day, which he accomplished in a few seconds. On questioning him as to his early habits, he admitted that he had been from his earliest years a depredator; had attended the Episcopal Church along with his stepfather and mother, and occasionally the Sabbath School; but his mind at the time led him more frequently to seek the company of other boys, older and more dexterous in thieving than himself.

Passing to a neighbouring cell, along with the teacher, we were introduced to another youth, between sixteen and seventeen years of age. He was seated in his narrow abode on a low box, teasing old ropes, and though there was wanting the intellectual provision which the other culprit had at command, we soon felt convinced that here also the prison walls had attractions. Our attention was first called to a wooden erection in the corner of the cell; it was rough workmanship, for the only tool that had been engaged in its carving and erection was the fragment of a shoemaker's knife, stuck into a weaver's pirn, which somehow or other had come into his possession, the blade of which was scarcely an inch and half in length. On looking into this piece of rough mechanism, we perceived a water-clock in full and regular movement, the whole so adjusted that the hands on the dial-plate indicated time with considerable accuracy. Several other pieces of mechanism were shown us by the youth of his own construction, with no other tool, as we were assured all along, than the piece of a shoemaker's knife. The fate of this youth, like the other one, was somewhat hard.

He had been condemned to banishment for life, for a crime of which, at the bar of the court, he declared his innocence, and from which declaration he has never yet swerved. The offence of which he was accused was a very heinous one indeed—setting fire to a mill for the sake of plunder, in the month of January last. A reward was offered for the guilty person, and two brothers, along with a *sociis criminis*, were the chief witnesses, on whose testimony the charge was found, proven, and sentence of banishment for life was recorded against two youths, both of whom protested that they were innocent of the offence laid to their charge. One of the two has been sent off to the settlements, but the other, the one noticed above, who perseveres in the maintenance of his innocence, being under age, remains in prison.

The following letter, containing particulars as to these two interesting youths, has been obligingly sent us by Mr. Lindsay, the teacher in the prisons:—

"Sir,—In reply to your interrogations about the mathematical acquirements or mechanical genius of two boys in Dundee prison, the following statement may be given:—The first boy was sentenced, nearly three years ago, to seven years' transportation; but, owing to bad health, has not yet been sent away. When he came first to prison he could read and write, and was acquainted with the first four fundamendal rules of arithmetic. I requested him to commit to memory and repeat to me psalms and chapters, and promised, as usual, small prize books. He soon repeated all the paraphrases, and a great number of psalms and chapters, and would repeat to me as much as I pleased. I urged him to advance in arithmetic, and he soon finished it. I gave him books in algebra, plane and spherical trigonometry, and practical mathematics; and, with such hints as I gave him in passing, he has become intimately acquainted with all these. I furnished him with books on astronomy, and gave him astronomic tables; he has become such an adept in the calculations of celestial phenomena, that I frequently employ him to verify my own calculations. In countless instances he has verified the Nautical Almanac, and could now almost construct one. He is acquainted with the most important of the lunar perturbations, and can determine the position of the moon, stars, and planets, within a few minutes of the truth, for any given time in past and future centuries. He knows the most important theorems and problems of geometry, and has lately begun to the Differential Calculus. He can read French pretty well, and has read, and almost understood, Delembert's book, 'De la Lune.' He is intimately acquainted with the Bible, and has read almost all the books in our library. When I last saw him he was engaged making from the Bible a chronological table, and comparing it with other tables of chronology. His favourite pursuit is the calculation of eclipses and transits, and was much spurred on when I lately showed him, through a telescope, the transit of Mercury. On his first coming in he had many bad habits, tore or scribbled the books, and in many other respects transgressed the prison laws; but these habits have long ago left him, and for more than a year he has not been found fault with by any of the officials. He is about sixteen or seventeen years old.

"The other boy, about seventeen years old, was sentenced at last Perth Circuit to transportation for life, but has not yet been sent away. On his coming in he could scarcely read, and could not write at all. At first he showed a strong disposition to drawing portraits, and other things, and, without any instruction from me in this art, he has attained great proficiency. Our Governor, Mr. Mackison, himself a first-rate draughtsman, has given him hints in this department, and has formed a very high opinion of his genius. He next came out in the character of a mechanic, and with

small bits of wood and clay, and a broken knife, his only tool, he formed a remarkably good model of a steam engine. I urged him to make a clock, in order to know the hour by it, and gave him a few hints how he should proceed. To accomplish this he made many attempts, but his great difficulty was with the pendulum. He formed the idea of a water clock, and this idea seems to be entirely his own. He makes water to trickle into buckets of wood, which he has made with his knife, and, by means of wheelwork, has succeeded in making a tolerably good clock, which might have served for common purposes before the discovery of the pendulum. When passing I still urge him to the pendulum, and lately showed him the mechanism of a clock. I agree with Mr. Mackison in thinking that he has great fertility of genius; and I cannot but think that both he and the other boy might, by peculiar management, become ornaments of society. Inferior to these two, we have a number of boys that have made considerable progress in learning. In conclusion, I beg leave to state in writing what I have often stated in words, that the whip, and not the prison, is in my opinion the true reformer of juvenile delinquents.

"Yours truly, J. B. LINDSAY."

Literary Notices.

The Axe laid unto the Root of the Trees. A Sermon preached on the occasion of the Death of the HON. A. F. P. ASHLEY, at Harrow Chapel, on Trinity Sunday, June 3rd, 1849. By the REV. G. T. WARNER, M.A., Assistant Classical Master.

OVER the melancholy circumstance which occasioned the delivery of this most appropriate Sermon, not a few have deeply mourned. Not only has the deepest sympathy been felt, for those who have experienced the breaking up of the most tender of earthly ties, increased by so many endearing associations, but it is the painful conviction of those who best knew, that the loss is not *alone* to the few, but also to the many—to the church, the world, *and especially the poor.*

Possessing an experimental knowledge of the gospel of Christ—the true antidote for the world's miseries—intellectual capabilities of a superior order, an increasing sympathy for the poor and the destitute, which he often practically manifested, and early privileged with the precepts and example of his distinguished father, in whose footsteps he seemed anxious to follow—his loss is one which the coming generation may feel, but the extent of which it will not realize. Nor will the smallest share of the loss be to that sacred cause he had so much at heart, and for the promotion of which our pages are specially devoted. It is, therefore, that we feel it a painful, yet pleasing duty, to present our readers with the following extracts from the Sermon, which are fraught with so many incentives to reflection and gratitude:—

"For this sense of the need of forgiveness God waits. This is absolutely necessary to every one who would repent, that is, turn to his God that he may live. How touchingly have I seen this exemplified in him, who three Sundays ago was sitting here amongst you, but now 'sitteth in heavenly places with Christ.' At the early age of sixteen, after a singularly blameless childhood, bearing a good report from home to his first school; from that to this; living without reproach amongst us, as

we all know, and as I dare not trust myself particularly to describe; he is suddenly called to a bed of sickness, which he believed would be his bed of death. He does not say, 'I have done no harm to any one; I have done good to many; I have pleased and obeyed my instructors; I have pitied the poor; I have not blasphemed; I have reverenced—I have even loved my God.' He says nothing of this kind. He sends for a book, which he had used in health, in which the passages of Scriptural doctrine, commandment, and promise, are arranged in chapters; and anxious to have these, not scattered, but condensed rays of pardoning light shining on his soul, he says to his attendant, 'Read to me about the forgiveness of sins.' The forgiveness of sins! how powerful a rebuke to the self-righteousness of many!"

"It was because the Scriptures spoke of the forgiveness of sins through the Son of God, that our departed friend had peace in his death. For when the twenty-second chapter of Revelation had been read to him, he said to his mother, 'Oh! the joys of heaven seem too intense and glorious for such an one as I am;' and when, in reference to this anxiety, a minister of Christ reminded him of the words in the seventh chapter of the Revelation of St. John, which describe the inheritors of that holy kingdom, 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God;' he heard of the blood—the rebukes of conscience were silenced; the rising trouble of his heart passed away, and his soul returned to its rest."

"On one occasion, in his illness, when the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galations was being read to him, he asked that the 17th and 18th verses might be read twice: 'If while we seek to be justified by Christ we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid; for if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.' You see how his soul longed after holiness, dreaded to abuse the justifying grace of Christ. He cast himself on the Almighty One for the sanctifying grace of life. Hence, in choosing a hymn to be especially read to him, he chose 'A Litany to the Holy Spirit,' in which each of five consecutive stanzas terminates with the prayer, 'Blest Spirit, comfort me.' And may I not add, that a general conformity in his whole conduct to the will of God, during his life, speaks to us of those good works, which the baptism of the Spirit had wrought in him, but of which he when dying made no mention. Naturally reserved in the communication of his own feelings, he was more so with reference to the emotions of his soul. But his life spoke enough to his family and to all who knew him. Toward his instructors he was orderly and diligent in the discharge of his duty; and not only so, but grateful for their teaching, and affectionate in his esteem of them. Toward his equals and companions he was patient under injuries, doing good for evil, not morosely separating himself from their company; cheerful, but not frivolous. Toward those younger and lower than himself he was invariably kind and considerate. For the poor, whom he deeply pitied, he was wont, when occasion offered, to labour, visiting them in their homes and schools, and always showing a lively and patient interest in the works of his distinguished father for their temporal or spiritual relief. Toward his parents he so conducted himself that they can now describe him as their 'blameless and blessed child.' Toward his God, as I have had opportunity of observing, both at his confirmation and since, he showed the power of a sober-minded and holy fear, which guarded his lips, and preserved him amidst temptations. 'Whoso loveth me keepeth my words,' said Christ. The word of God he kept. He had read it largely and thoughtfully, and he gave touching evidence of his anxiety for the glory of God, and the happiness of his fellow-men. Only a few days since, when mention being made of the probably near approach of the close of this dispensation, and of the opening of a brighter, he cried out, 'Oh! how glorious to think of the speedy termination of this wicked and miserable world.' In all these things we see 'the fruits of the Spirit,' the sufficient evidence that he had been 'baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'"

"And now let me add a few more words for your own sakes. You have sympathized with him in his sickness; you offered your prayers in his behalf. How solemnly, how affectingly, did such petitions mingle in the confirmation service of many, and in that of their first communion! And your prayers, my dear brethren, have been heard—have been answered. He had from God 'patience under his

sufferings.' Once during their course he was heard to utter, not in the loud language of impatience, but in the soft whispers of gentlest resignation, which felt, but resisted not, his portion of the curse!—once was he heard solemnly to breathe the ejaculation, 'O! Adam, Adam, why didst thou fall?' And he had from God, besides this, 'patience under his sufferings,' 'a happy issue out of all his afflictions;' happy in the manner of it; for, as we were all hoping, himself as well, that he would recover, he was removed at last, suddenly, without the fear of death, without its struggle, without the pang of bidding farewell to those he must have mourned to leave. And that he was happy in the result of his issue from this world who can doubt, who believes that the spirits of all who depart hence in the Lord are even now in rest and felicity?"

"'The axe lieth at the root of the trees.' The hand of the invisible Feller hath not yet lifted it, but his messenger crieth, 'Repent ye,' and that now; for 'every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire.' Repent then, *now*. Defer not the all-essential change till your death-bed. What though you should lie there thirteen days as he did, listen to his experience and be wise? On being asked by his father, 'Can you think, my dear child, as you lie there?' he replied, 'Yes, I can; but—I have been thinking how futile a thing must be a death-bed repentance; if I had not made my peace with God before I came to this, I should never have been reconciled to Him.' Lay to heart, that you may repent, the tender and urgent arguments, expostulations, that reach you from your homes, from the hearts of your fathers and of your mothers, from your friends, from this pulpit every Sabbath, from the death-bed of our departed friend. As he lay a-dying, he cast his arms fondly around his father's neck, and said, 'I want to bless you and thank you, dearest papa, for having brought me up as you have done; for having brought me up religiously; I now feel all the benefits of it; it is to you that I owe my salvation.' Oh! I can well believe, my dear young friends, that if you were lying on your sick-bed, you, like him, might say, 'Read to me about the forgiveness of sins,'—you might say, 'the joys of heaven are too glorious for such an one as I am;' you might select that Holy Litany, 'Blest Spirit, comfort me;' you might say, too, with as much sincerity, though, perhaps, with more alarm, 'How futile is the idea of a death-bed repentance.' But oh! see to it, I do beseech you earnestly; see to it, that you may also be able to say to those who have taught you the love of Christ, 'to you I owe the salvation of my soul!'"

The Axe has been laid unto the root of the tree. The flower has been nipped as it began to blossom, and give promise of precious fruit! May the perusal of these affecting statements be the means of arousing many young minds to activity on behalf of those poor outcasts, for whom he prayed and laboured; so that at the last great day they may meet with those who shall own *their* instrumentality, as a means of blessing, in the hand of God, and say "To you I owe my salvation!"

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

SIR,—On Wednesday Evening, the 18th July, I was present at the Second Anniversary of the Clare Market Ragged Schools, which was held at the Vestry House, opposite St. Clement Danes Church in the Strand; a number of very good speeches were delivered, one particularly by Mr. Joseph Payne, full of rich humour and practical observation; but there was one speech, which forcibly impressed itself on my mind, and sent me home full of thoughtful musings. The speech I refer to was that of the Rev. F. D. Maurice, M.A., Professor of Divinity at King's College, London, whose remarks were to the following effect:—"His learned friend, Mr. Payne, who had addressed them, had delighted them with his brilliant humour, and he was quite

right in expressing himself in such pleasant strains, for he had borne the burden and heat of the day, and might fairly rejoice at the good he had accomplished; but the case was far different with the clergy; they had no right thus to speak, for they had been supine; they had neglected to grapple manfully, as they ought to have done, with the great evils of our social system, and the consequence was, that their other efforts had been impeded by the vice and immorality by which they were surrounded; to them therefore belonged shame and confusion of face. He trusted, however, that they were beginning to recognise their duty. He was connected with an establishment where persons intended for the clerical function were trained, and they always insisted on the duty of 'practising,' as well as 'professing,' the principles of the Bible. It was no use 'professing,' if we did not 'practise,' the precepts of Him 'who went about doing good.'" Such language, sir, at such a time, and from such a man as Professor Maurice, who for some time past has been known to the educational world by his brilliant and zealous exertions, is particularly valuable; it cannot be too highly estimated; it tells a tale with which pious Churchmen have long been painfully familiar, but it fills them again with hope, that the clergy will more literally than for some time past, attend to the exhortation which the bishop gave them at their ordination, "To seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever." And it is most gratifying to know that the Ragged School movement has been not only patronized, but brought into action, in several of the most destitute districts of the metropolis, by some of our best clergymen; but, sir, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that the great body of the clergy are not with us. What is the reason? It cannot be that they disapprove of our exertions; our efforts cannot fail to prove an assistance to their own: perhaps the matter has not been brought before them as it ought to have been—systematically; but whatever the cause, the fact remains the same. And here I would make a suggestion: why should not every parish or district have its Ragged School? and why should not the Rector or Incumbent be at the head of its management? Of course, I write this for members of the Church of England; other communities might have, and I should be glad to see them have, as many as they pleased, but it cannot be denied, that the Church of England has many more appliances than others, and therefore should be expected to do a great deal more than they, and (forgive a Churchman for saying it) she could if she would. The School whose Anniversary I attended might in some degree serve as a model; the Rector of the Parish is its President, and Chairman of the Committee; the Curates are active members of the Committee, as also are several of the past officers and substantial men of the parish; the Scripture Reader is Secretary; and, if I am not misinformed, several other Schools have a similar management. What a grand sight it would be if all the clergy and parishes of London followed their example!

I would just mention in conclusion a cheering fact, which may be looked upon as a sign of the times. A part of the *curriculum* for theological students at King's College, the establishment with which Professor Maurice is connected, is, instruction in the best mode of managing a Ragged School, and each student is expected to take a class one night in the week at least, at a school formed under the superintendence of the principal of the college! When we remember the small beginnings with which the movement commenced, it must surprise us not a little to find the matter taken up in this way; but, let none imagine that even the humblest of those who have hitherto striven manfully in the work may now become indolent—they ought rather to buckle on their armour afresh, for the battle is scarcely begun! we have hitherto been as it were only skirmishing; mighty efforts will be required, and no soldier must be absent from his post; we must fight even to the death, if needed, for the moral regeneration of our country. Do we despair of success? Do we think the chances of victory exceedingly small? Indeed, they would be if they depended upon our own exertions; but the "battle is the Lord's," and he will not withhold his power; like the saints of old, we shall "overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of His testimony:" victory shall be our reward, bringing peace and happiness in its train, and we shall be led to exclaim, with grateful surprise, in a true and proper sense, *Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*

I am, sir, your most obedient servant, "A CHURCHMAN."

Intelligence.

SOUTH LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THE third Annual Meeting of these Schools was held at the Horns Tavern, Kennington, on the evening of Thursday, the 7th of June. Lord Ashley had been announced to preside, but a letter was read from the noble Lord, stating that his recent domestic affliction, the loss of a son, prevented his fulfilling the engagement.

In the absence of his Lordship, D. W. Wire, Esq., was voted to the Chair. In introducing the Secretary to read the Report, the Chairman said, the experience of the past year amply demonstrated the necessity for Ragged Schools, and also the great benefits that had flowed from the instruction imparted in them. He thought they could not point out an example more worthy of imitation than that furnished by the teachers in Ragged Schools, for they could not engage in it from any other than the purest and holiest of motives; and the result of their labours was often signally successful. The supporters of Ragged Schools could now congratulate themselves on their success, for there had not only been found funds to carry them on, but the movement was even becoming fashionable, for the rich, the great, the noble, the refined, were to be found amongst the advocates of these schools.

The Secretary then read the Report, from which it appeared that the number of boys admitted during the past year was 169, and of girls 147. The average attendance of boys was 51; of girls 66. Two boys had, by the kindness of Lord Ashley, been provided with passages to Australia, and were doing well there. The financial statement showed a balance of £15. 0s. 5d. due to the Treasurer.

Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P., moved the first Resolution. He said, the Report contained these words, "We appeal to you whom God hath made so to differ from these unfortunate children." Why, he asked, was not he one of those ragged children? why was not he picked up from under a cart some night? why was not he left in ignorance and vice? His answer must be—through the merciful providence of God. Thus it was with others, and it was incumbent on them to show their sense of the obligations under which they lay to that Providence, by raising those poor children to a higher position, and instructing them in knowledge and virtue.

The Rev. Charles Kemble seconded the Resolution, and made some able remarks on the principles and results of Ragged Schools.

The Rev. Mr. Hussey moved the next Resolution, consisting of an expression of thankfulness to God for the prosperity of the Schools, and pledging the Meeting to do its utmost for the extension of those successes. He spoke of the necessity of education, and related some incidents proving the efficacy of the instruction given in Ragged Schools, to convert sinners to the knowledge of the Saviour, and urged them to do all that lay in their power to further the noble cause.

The Rev. John Branch, in an address abounding in facts illustrative of the good effected by Ragged Schools, seconded the Resolution.

The Rev. J. Chorley moved the next Resolution—That that Meeting considered Ragged Schools, conducted on the principles of the Ragged School Union, the best means, under the Divine blessing, to improve the social, moral, and spiritual condition of the degraded and once neglected portion of the youthful population, and acknowledged their special claim upon the sympathy of all Christians.

Mr. Walker, of the City Mission, seconded the Resolution, and related the history of the happy death of a lad who had been rescued from the deepest misery, and trained to morality in a Ragged School. He trusted to see this metropolis ultimately roused, and come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty evils that now crush to misery and vice the lowest classes of the land. The Resolution having passed, a vote of thanks to the Chairman was, on the motion of Joseph Payne, Esq., carried by acclamation, and the Meeting terminated.

CLARE MARKET RAGGED SCHOOL, YEATES' COURT, ST. CLEMENT DANES.

THE second Anniversary Meeting of the supporters of this School was held on Wednesday evening, 18th July, in the Vestry Hall of St. Clement Danes, the Right Hon. Lord Ashley in the Chair. The proceedings were opened with Prayer by the Rev. W. W. Ellis, rector of the parish.

The Chairman then observed, that everything he saw in connection with these institutions convinced him of their indispensable necessity, and that they were the only means by which access could be gained to the peculiar classes they were intended to benefit. Without such means it was inevitable that these children must grow up in a course of crime, and terminate their lives either as convicts or as the victims of the hangman; for in their present ignorant, dirty, and degraded condition, it was almost impossible that they should obtain honest employment, however they might desire it. This was proved by facts which he had elicited from the children themselves by personal investigation. He then contrasted the preventive with the punitive system, and showed the advantages of the former in a financial point of view. The £1,500 expended by the government in sending out 150 children from the Ragged Schools to Australia, had done more good than the reformatory system of Pentonville and Parkhurst would ever do with £1,500,000; and even supposing that by this latter method we succeeded in the reformation of some few prisoners, the effect was only temporary—they were inevitably compelled, when turned on the world with tainted characters, and in the present crowded state of the labour market, to return to their old courses. In every aspect, therefore, the preventive policy was the most humane, most Christian-like, and most certain. These things deeply concerned the public peace, and the public honour. That we should entirely get rid of crime he regarded as very improbable, but by applying the means at our disposal in early life, we should remove the great excess of crime which now exists, and bring it down to the level at which human nature would ever keep it. He held it to be one of the greatest scandals that ever appeared upon the brow of a nation, that, with the wealth and resources which we have at our command, there should exist within our very grasp a body of human beings, the most destitute, most ignorant, most vicious, most persecuted, and most heathen, to be found on the face of the globe; and so long as God should give him breath, he would not cease to cry "Unclean! unclean!" Never had there been a period in the history of mankind when so great an opportunity was offered for exertions such as the present; and if we persisted in a course of indifference and neglect, we should bring upon ourselves, not only in this world, but in that which is to come, a most direful and most just retribution; because we should be told then, as we are now, in the words of Holy Writ, that "he that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

The Rev. Mr. Ellis then read the Report, which had been drawn up by the Scripture Reader of the district. At the last anniversary the want of a girls' school had been deplored by the friends of the institution. In January last, the Committee succeeded in their efforts to accomplish that object. The girls' school was open every evening, except Saturday, from five till seven. The average attendance was from fifty to sixty. During the summer months the numbers were less, in consequence of some of the children obtaining little places, or employing themselves by selling fruit in the streets, etc. One night in every week was set apart for industrial training and needlework; the materials being purchased from a fund raised by the Ladies' Committee, who also cut out articles of dress for the children, which, when made, were sold to them at half the cost of the material—thus leading them to acquire habits of industry, and at the same time rendering their appearance more respectable. The children were also encouraged to subscribe for Bibles at reduced prices; three had already been paid, and others were being subscribed for. The boys' school had been established two years. The number who had attended since its commencement had been about 400; the average for the past year about 60. The school was open on week-day evenings, except Saturday, from eight to ten; and on Sunday evenings from seven till nine o'clock. The secular instruction occupied but a subordinate

position, the prime object of the Committee being, to engraft upon the minds of the children correct moral and religious principles. In addition to some Bibles which several boys were enabled to purchase at once, not less than sixteen had been paid for by penny and halfpenny subscriptions. Ten copies of the Prayer Book, and thirteen Spelling Books, had been purchased in like manner. These schools had furnished 12 of the 150 boys sent out by the government to Australia, and letters had since been received from them, giving evidence of their gratitude, and of the benefit which they had derived from their instructions. The Committee regretted the insufficiency of the funds at their disposal, and the consequent insufficiency of accommodation in the school rooms.

The Rev. Gentleman, in moving the first Resolution, namely, "That the Report just read was a satisfactory sign of progressive advancement towards the social, moral, and spiritual objects which the establishment of Ragged Schools had in view," said, that the purchase of Bibles, etc., mentioned in the Report, was quite voluntary on the part of the children; and it was satisfactorily ascertained that they read these Bibles, and in some cases not only they, but their parents. He also read a letter from one of the Emigrants, which fully confirmed the statements of the Resolution.

Richard Twining, Esq., had great pleasure in seconding the Resolution. Though he could claim no merit for personal attendance at the schools, he had had frequent opportunities of judging of their success from the reports of others. One remarkable feature of these schools was, their influence in drawing the minds of parents of the pupils to the Book of Salvation. He urged the importance of establishing Industrial Classes, and trusted the Government would be induced to grant still more assistance to these institutions, and that the public would be stimulated also to increased exertions on their behalf.

The Resolution having been carried, the Chairman took the opportunity of saying, that a sum of money having been deposited in his hands by a lady for the encouragement of Ragged Schools, he therefore offered, in case the sum of £35 should be subscribed by the Meeting for the establishment of Industrial Classes, to make it up to £50.

Joseph Payne, Esq., moved the next Resolution, "That the Emigration Scheme already in operation, for the benefit of the best trained boys and girls in Ragged Schools, is worthy of all support, and lays an additional obligation on those who are interested in the cause, to secure the best kind of training for that purpose."

(Lord Ashley having left the Chair, it was filled for the remainder of the evening by Mr. Twining.)

Mr. Garmon seconded the Resolution. He had been engaged for twenty-three years in connection with Sunday Schools, and he related from experience a variety of circumstances, showing the necessity and the beneficial results of the Ragged School movement.

Mr. Lewis then moved, "That the training to be adopted in these schools, however it may vary in details from time to time, shall always proceed upon two great principles, first, that of teaching religion from the pure word of God, and secondly, that of promoting habits of honest industry." He had been struck by the intelligence and cunning depicted on the features of the lower classes, and felt how important it was that their talent should be rightly directed.

The Rev. Professor Maurice seconded the Resolution. He was connected with a school for the education of clergymen, close by; and he felt that those clergymen should be instructed, that to go forth among these poor children, as their brethren, as those to whom they had a message to deliver, was their duty and their highest honour and privilege. He could not join on behalf of the clergy of this country in the cheerful language adopted by Mr. Payne; their language must be that of humiliation on account of their neglect of this important duty. He had great pleasure in seconding the Resolution.

Votes of thanks to Lord Ashley and Mr. Twining, the Chairmen, were moved and seconded by Mr. Anderson and Mr. W. Locke, of the Ragged School Union; and a vote of thanks to the Churchwardens for the use of the room and for their attendance having been also passed, the Meeting separated.